

## NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

### LETTERS FROM SAGUENAY RIVER, CANADA.

#### TO THE EDITORS.

TADAUSAC, JUNE 20, 1847.

I have not visited Canada for the purpose of examining her cities and studying the character of her people, but solely with a view of hunting up some new scenery and having a little sport in the way of salmon fishing. I am writing this letter at the mouth of probably the most remarkable river in North America. But, before entering upon a description of my sojourn here, it is meet, I ween, that I should give you an account of my journey down the St. Lawrence.

On reaching Quebec I was informed that there was no regular mode of conveyance down the great river, and that I should have to take passage in a transient ship or schooner which would land me at my desired haven. This intelligence had a tendency to dampen my spirits, and I had to content myself by sauntering about the citadel city. Among the places I visited was the fish market, where it was my good fortune to find a small smack, which had brought a load of fresh salmon to market, and was on the point of returning to the Saguenay for another cargo. In less than thirty minutes after I first saw him I had struck a bargain with the skipper, transferred my luggage on board the smack, and was on my way to a region which was to me unknown.

We hoisted sail at twelve o'clock, and were favored by a stiff westerly breeze. Every thing in fact connected with the voyage was beautifully accidental, and I had a "glorious time." In the first place our craft was just the thing—schooner rigged, a fast sailer, and perfectly safe. The skipper—named Belland—was a warm-hearted and intelligent Frenchman, whose entire crew consisted of one boy. The day was superb, and the scenery of the river appeared to me more like the work of enchantment than nature.

The appearance of Quebec, from the eastward, is imposing in the extreme. Standing as it does upon a lofty bluff, its massive ramparts, and tin-covered roofs, domes, and cupolas suggest the idea of immense power and opulence. Just below the city the St. Lawrence spreads out to the width of three or four miles, while from the margin of either shore fade away a continued succession of hills, which vary from five hundred to fifteen hundred feet in height. Those upon the north shore are the highest, and both sides of the river for a distance of some twenty miles below the city are plentifully sprinkled with the white cottages of the Canadian peasantry. As we proceeded, however, the river gradually widens, the hills upon the north shore become more lofty, reaching the elevation of two thousand feet; and, while you only occasionally discover a farm-house upon their summits, the southern shore continues to bear the appearance of a settled country, where the spire of a catholic church is frequently seen looming above a cluster of rural residences. In descending the river the first pictorial feature which attracts attention is the Fall of Montmorency, pouring the waters of a noble tributary immediately into the St. Lawrence. Just below this fall the river is divided by the island of Orleans, which measures about twenty miles in length and five in breadth. It is partly covered with forest and partly cultivated, and though the shores are rather low, it contains a number of points which are a hundred feet high. At the eastern termination of this island is the parish of St. Laurent, a remarkably tidy little French village, whose inhabitants are said to be as simple in their manners as they are virtuous and ignorant of the world at large. On a smaller island, which lies some thirty miles below Quebec, and directly opposite a noble cape called Tourment, is located the quarantine station for the shipping of the river; and when I passed this spot I counted no less than forty-five ships at anchor, nearly all of which were freighted with foreign paupers, who were then dying of the ship fever at the rate of one hundred and fifty individuals per day. I might here mention that the vessels usually seen on this part of the St. Lawrence are merchant ships and brigs, which are chiefly and extensively employed in the lumber and timber trade. Another island in this portion of the St. Lawrence, which attracts attention from its peculiar island beauty, is called Goose island, and owned by a Sisterhood of Nuns, who have cultivated it quite extensively. The eastern portion of it is yet covered with forest; the channels on either side are not far from five miles wide, and it is distant from Quebec about fifty miles.

We landed here at sunset; and while my companions were building a watch-fire and cooking a supper of fish, pork, and onions, I amused myself by taking sundry observations. I found the vegetation of the island quite luxuriant, the common hard woods of the north prevailing, but its foundation seemed to be composed of two distinct species of slate stone. Both varieties were of the finest grain, and while one of a rich Indian red the other was a deep blue. This portion of the St. Lawrence is a good deal blocked up by extensive reefs composed of these identical sandstones, and at one point they extend so nearly across the river as to render the ship navigation extremely dangerous. On subsequently examining the high hills on the north shore, in this vicinity, I found them solid granite, veined with red marble and extensive beds of quartz, and covered with a stunted forest of pine and hemlock. But this geological dissertation is keeping my pen from describing a little picture which it was my privilege to witness on this beautiful but badly named island, where, for sundry reasons, we concluded to spend the night.

Our supper was ended, and the skipper had paid his last visit to the little craft, and, with his boy, had smoked himself to sleep by our camp-fire. The sky was without a cloud but studded with stars, and the breeze which kissed my cheek was soft and pleasant as the breath of one we dearly love. I had seated myself upon a rock, with my face turned towards the north, when my attention was attracted by a column of light which shot upward to the zenith behind the distant mountains. The broad expanse of the St. Lawrence was without a ripple, and the mountains, together with the column of light and the unnumbered stars, were distinctly mirrored in its bosom. While looking upon this scene the idea struck me that the moon was about to rise, but I soon saw a crimson glow stealing up the sky, and knew that I was looking upon the fantastic performances of the Northern Lights. Broad and of the purest white were the many rays which shot upward from behind the mountain, and at equal distances between the horizon and the zenith were displayed four arches of a purple hue, the uppermost one melting imperceptibly in the deep blue sky. On again turning my eyes upward I discovered that the columns and arches had all disappeared, and that the entire sky was covered with a crimson color, which resembled a lake of liquid fire tossed into innumerable waves. Strange were my feelings as I looked upon this scene and thought of the unknown wilderness before me, and of the Being whose ways are past finding out, and who holdeth the entire world, with its cities, mountains, rivers, and boundless wildernesses, in the hollow of his hand. Long and intently did I gaze upon this wonder of the north; and at the moment that it was fading away a wild swan passed over my head, sailing towards the north, and as his lonely song echoed along the silent air I retraced my steps to the watch-fire and was soon a dreamer.

That portion of the St. Lawrence extending between Goose island and the Saguenay is about twenty miles wide. The spring tides rise and fall a distance of eighteen feet; the water is salt but clear and cold, and the channel is very deep. Here it was that I first saw the black seal, the white porpoise, and the black whale. But speaking of whales reminds me of a "whaling" fish story. A short distance above the Saguenay river there shoots out into the St. Lawrence, to the distance of about eight miles, a broad sand bank, which greatly endangers the navigation. In descending the great river we had to double this cape, and it was at this point that I first saw a whale. The fellow had been pursued by a sword fish, and when we discovered him his head was turned towards the beach, and he was moving with great rapidity, occasionally performing a most fearful leap, and uttering a sound that resembled the bellowing of a thousand angry bulls. The whale must have been forty feet long and his enemy nearly twenty, and as they hurried on their course with great speed the sight was indeed terrible. Frantic with rage and pain, it so happened that the more unweildy individual forgot his bearings, and in a very few minutes he was foundering about

on the sandbar, in about ten feet of water, and the rascally sword immediately beat a retreat. After a while, however, the whale concluded to rest himself; but as the tide was going out his intentions were soon changed, and he began to roll himself about and slap the water with his tail for the purpose of getting clear. His efforts in a short time proved successful, and when we last saw him he was in the deepest part of the river, moving rapidly towards the Gulf, and spouting up the water as if congratulating himself upon his narrow escape.

In about two hours after witnessing this incident our boat was moored at the mouth of the Saguenay; and of the comparatively unknown wilderness which this stream waters I hope to send you some interesting letters.

#### THE WATER-CURE, AGAIN.

Having given place in our columns to that Brattleborough man's accounts of the two stages in the process of water-curing, we suppose it is our bounden duty to go through the whole series. Though the state of the weather about these days is not exactly favorable for calling attention to the heating stages of the affair, there are occasional glimpses of cold plunges in icy water the very thought of which is consoling. Number three lets us into the mystery—if mystery it can be called, with mercury at 90° of SWEATING.

BATTLEBOROUGH, JUNE 21, 1847.

You have already received a description of the first stage of wet-sheet packing—how a subject is folded up very tight, first in a wet sheet, then with three or four thick blankets, and covered over with a feather bed, to guard against catching cold, and how he lies in this condition till he gets warm, which is usually in from one to two hours, to be then taken out and tumbled into the plunge to cool. Well, this packing is one thing, and the sweating process is another thing; quite another thing in its effect, although, in fact, only the same thing as the other, with an appendix and a supplement—the appendix being the hot stage that immediately ensues, and the supplement the abundant flow of perspiration that follows that.

After sleeping a delightful sleep in the packed-up and laid-out state, a decided change comes over the spirit of his dream, and his fancies become not a little lurid; he wakes up any where else than in Abraham's bosom, and awakes to find just where he always expected to go, where his friends feared he would go, and where his enemies had often wished him; consciousness comes upon him with an all-ative sensation over the whole surface, as if his skin were all nerve, and a sense of oppression, as if the feather bed were a mountain. His head is as a bushel, every joint is cramped and uneasy, his inward are parched with thirst, and an intense burning consumes his outward. The heat is upon him. The doctor has told him to expect this, and advised him of the ways of alleviating the unpleasant symptoms. He is a sensible man, and with ordinary judgment and resolution; but, for the time, he forgets all his resolutions, and loses all his judgment, and the great fact flashes across his mind that the water-cure is a humbug, and himself not only a deceived, but injured man; it is evident he is outrageously oppressed.

He calls for his bath attendant. Now, it so happens that Henry, not being blessed with ubiquity, and having only the ordinary allowance of hands, is at present busy in rubbing down a patient whose prescription allows him a "hard rubbing for ten minutes;" the other bath men are busy with their own respective charges. Henry knows what is wanted, but can only answer, "Me can not come now—wait five minutes." Five minutes! a little eternity to the burning man; but Henry has such such cases before, and he knows that he knows how to use the sufferings of others. The subject still shouts "Henry, Henry, Henry, Henry." And every shout increases his distress. Soon No. 22 joins his voice to the chorus, and the whole wing rings with the shouting. Henry pliegmatically rubs legs and arms, and back and back, and arms and legs, consoling himself with the thought that he is fulfilling his duty, and that the subject won't die. The subject doesn't agree with him in the last idea, but is convinced that he will die, and that right soon, without the melancholy satisfaction of kicking in his last agonies. He repeats him of having despised calomel and jalap. Then he forgets propriety, and forthwith anathematizes Henry. The sympathizers join in the anathemas, and the bath man is truly covered with every breath of Nos. 18, 20, and 22.

At last Henry comes, but is astonished to see the roll of beach-boards and the bedstead which he knows is a "hot man," performing strange movements, lifting and falling at one end, wriggling at both, twisting and jerking, as if a chrysalis had taken a notion that it "would be a butterfly," and was struggling to burst the vile folds that held him to earth. These convulsions soon release the arms and the upper part of the body. Henry is in doubt whether to consider it a case of craziness and run for help, or to prepare for a fistfight, when, with his partial release, the subject becomes tranquil, falls back on the pillow, and exclaims, "All right; it was only to see if I could get out of this if I wanted to; I am satisfied; pack me again." Henry does so, and proceeds to apply the palliatives—opens the window, and puts a wet cloth on the forehead, with an effect so magical that the subject can well realize why "a certain rich man" once, in a like situation, "spiced his cold relief with a little application of cold water." The perspiration now bursts forth, to his exquisite and entire relief; he becomes as quiet as a lamb and sweats like a bull; and now it will do to drink a little.

He takes from time to time a few mouthfuls of water, which greatly promote the operation, and a third stage comes on, wherein his sensations are as if he didn't rest any where, but floated in mid air like Mahomet's coffin; as if the clouds were his bed and clouds his dress; as if his body and legs, arms, and trunk, with their manifold sensations and affections, were nothing to him, and time and space and care were forgotten circumstances. If he could command entire consciousness he would beg Doctor Wessellhoff's pardon for having lately thought some hard things of the establishment. It is not, however, entirely unpleasant to be aroused to prepare for the plunge. How sweet are its icy waters, as they lave his sinning-but body! as "as refreshing as fifty ice creams all at once." Even when he comes out and is rubbed, he feels that a little more cooling would not be bad, so slips through Henry's fingers and soles in again. This process wastes the system of some of its substance, but, after a walk, in which the joints move with remarkable ease, he returns to supply any deficiency in his substance with immeasurable quantities of hominy and milk, white bread and yellow butter.

After the first trial the process is easy, and although the hot stage can never be made entirely pleasant, it soon becomes quite endurable.

#### IRON AND RAILROADS IN TENNESSEE.

Few of our readers are acquainted with the extent of the iron business in Tennessee. Mr. MORRIS, in his report to the Legislature, estimates the capital employed in the business at \$4,100,000, and the annual products at the same amount. Three-fourths of this capital is employed in Middle Tennessee, and would contribute to the support of the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad. On the Cumberland river near Nashville there are "21 blast furnaces, 11 forges, and 3 splendid rolling mills, which yield annually about \$800,000." On the Tennessee river "there are 12 furnaces and 8 forges and bloomeries, which produce about 180,000 tons annually." East Tennessee is particularly rich in iron ore, water power, and fuel of every kind. At present the products of their mines and furnaces are carried down the Tennessee, over the muscle shoals, thence to the Ohio, and up that river to Pittsburgh, where they are manufactured and returned to the South for consumption! At Chattanooga we are informed that pig iron can now be purchased for \$17 per ton, while it commands in Savannah something like \$23. The moment the Georgia improvements reach the Tennessee, the whole trade of the country bordering upon that river and its tributaries above Chattanooga will be turned towards the Atlantic. The iron, the corn, the flour, the fruit, the tobacco, the hemp, and the thousand other products of that region will swell the trade of our State works to at least double, perhaps ten-fold, what it is at present. Iron, for instance, could not be brought from Chattanooga to Macon, commissions included, for about the same freight now paid from Savannah, say 30 cents per cwt, which would give it to the people of Macon and the planters of middle Georgia at a little over two-thirds the price now paid.

According to an able letter addressed by V. K. SKEKENS, Esq. to the Hon. JOHN C. CALHOUN, we are surprised to learn that the agricultural products of Tennessee are in value equal to \$57,551,820, while those of Ohio are only \$57,899,394, and of New York \$57,685,400, showing Tennessee to be the third State in the Union in productive wealth. According to the same authority the annual value of all kinds of agricultural and manufactured articles produced in the immediate vicinity of the proposed railroad between Chattanooga and Nashville amounts to \$12,042,576. And yet in the items enumerated we find Mr. S. has entirely omitted the article of wheat, of which Tennessee produces 8,340,000 bushels per year—nearly one-half of which is grown in the Cumberland valley.—*Macon Journal and Messenger.*

DECISION AGAINST THE LONG ISLAND RAILROAD.—In the matter of the Long Island Railroad Company, for damages for the loss of the services of his daughter Anna, who was killed through the alleged negligence of the railroad agents, Judge Greenwood, as referee, on Thursday rendered a decision in favor of the plaintiff for \$950.—*New York Gaz.*

#### THE INTERCEPTED DESPATCH.

FROM THE NEW ORLEANS PICAYUNE OF JUNE 26.

The passage in the intercepted letter of Secretary MARCY to Gen. SCOTT which attracts most attention in Mexico is the concluding portion, which is substantially as follows:

"Initiations have been given to the Government that a portion of the people of the State of Vera Cruz, and also of some other States, is disposed to refuse obedience to the Central Government. Should such be the case, you will adopt such measures as may encourage this spirit, using the utmost discretion, nevertheless, that the United States may not appear compromised; as it may occasion embarrassment to the Government when negotiations for peace are entered upon. Should you judge it proper you might offer aid or protection when the war terminates."

Another portion of the Secretary's letter announces that Gen. TAYLOR had made application to the War Department for two or three thousand regulars who have been in the service, in case he should be expected to advance into the country. The Secretary says, that, much as the Government may be disposed to reinforce Gen. Taylor's division, it hardly deems it prudent to do so at the expense of Gen. Scott's command, who appears more particularly to need troops of the description indicated by Gen. Taylor. He leaves it therefore to Gen. Scott to decide, as commander-in-chief of the forces in Mexico, whether the suggestion of Gen. Taylor should be acceded to.

We do not attempt to translate the despatch, as, from the two-fold process, errors may well occur, and the original will no doubt shortly be given to the country.

#### TRADE AT VERA CRUZ.

"In conversation with officers lately from Vera Cruz, the Pittsburg Post learns that, at the time General Patterson left Vera Cruz, there were not less than two hundred sail of foreign vessels in that port, richly laden with the products of various climes. 'The citizens of that unfortunate country say no such evidence of commercial prosperity or enterprise has been witnessed by them. And the public of Mexico, as far as our arms have gone, is loud in approval of the triumph of order, good government, property, and security to persons and property, which appear to follow as consequences of the administration under the flag of the United States. We learn, further, that, in view of the collections of customs under the war tariff of President Polk, for the first week of May last, a sum not short of three hundred thousand dollars will be the revenue for the month of May at the port of Vera Cruz."

The modifications which were prepared a few days since by the Secretary of the Treasury, and sanctioned by the President, and announced in the *Union* of Saturday night, are calculated to improve the whole system.—*Union, June 14.*

FROM THE NEW ORLEANS BULLETIN, JUNE 26.

The assertion of the *Post*, that two hundred foreign vessels were at Vera Cruz, is so far from the truth that there never has been ten foreign merchant vessels at one time at Vera Cruz since we have been in possession of the place; that on the 11th of June there were only four, and at one time there was only one. The person who may have given the information to the *Post* was practising so gross and obvious a hoax upon the editor, that it is only strange he should have been willing to publish it, and still more strange that the *Union* should have attempted to palm it off upon its readers.

It requires but a moment's thought, as to the extent of a commerce from two hundred vessels, to show the absolute absurdity of it. The average duty under Mr. WALKER'S Mexican Tariff is 60 to 70 per cent.—say, however, only fifty per cent. The average value of cargoes arriving in foreign vessels would, at a moderate estimate, be probably 50,000 dollars, as they do not bring provisions or other bulky articles of small comparative value. But, suppose we say their cargoes, one with another, are worth only 25,000 dollars, which, at fifty per cent., would yield 12,500 dollars duty each, or for 200 cargoes \$2,500,000; and if their cargoes were placed at (what will be much nearer the truth) 50,000 dollars each, the revenue would be 5,000,000 of dollars. Yet, in the same paragraph, the *Union* says the revenue for the whole month of May will be only 300,000 dollars. This, too, includes all that which is paid by American vessels.

The average size of these two hundred foreign vessels would, certainly, be at least 200 tons, which, at one dollar per ton, would, of itself, yield 400,000 dollars for tonnage duty alone! The assertion as to the commercial prosperity of the place is equally destitute of foundation. The trade and commerce of Vera Cruz is greatly depressed, and is not one tithe what it was previous to the war. All letters unite in saying that not only is business on a very limited scale, but also that nothing is doing to advantage, and hold out no inducements for further shipments.

That there were a great many vessels at Vera Cruz (more, perhaps, than seen there for many years at one time) is probably true, but they were American, not foreign vessels, and so far from adding to the wealth and prosperity of our country, were unfortunately a drain upon both, as nearly the whole of them were transports, store-ships, provision vessels, and others in the employ of the Government, with stores and supplies for the army.

An intelligent merchant of this city, who left Vera Cruz on the 11th instant, informed us that he learned, from undoubted authority, that the *demurrage* of the vessels then at anchor, in the employ of the United States, was about 5,000 dollars per day, or at the rate of 150,000 dollars per month, but that during the preceding month it was at one time upwards of \$8,000 per day, which single item of expense would absorb nearly the whole revenue derived from the Tariff, even at the high estimate made of the latter by the *Union*.

A large portion of this demurrage is incurred most unnecessarily, in consequence of the want of proper exertions and arrangements for unloading and dispatching the vessel. Many vessels are kept at a demurrage of sixty, eighty, or a hundred dollars per day, with remnants of cargoes on board, which, with small exertion, might be promptly landed. This was particularly the case with a number of coal vessels, where the demurrage of a few days was fully equal to the whole value of the coal remaining on board, and where, if it could not be landed, one of the vessels could have received the remnants from the others, and these latter might have been dismissed.

A GRAPHIC DESCRIPTION.—We have often listened with admiration (says the *New York Commercial Advertiser*) to the accounts given by itinerant showmen, and the attaches of museums and menageries, of the structure, appearance, and habits of the various animals composing their interesting charge; said accounts sometimes including particulars never dreamed of by Buffon or Bingley. But the showmen are outdone by the editor of the *New Orleans National*, whose description of a Mexican "critter" we annex.

The critter, by the way, is common enough in Mexico, where the natives eat him. His true name, we believe, is the iguana. STEPHENS, in one of his books on Yucatan, gives an amusing account of an iguana chase by a party of laborers.

"THE GUANA—NATURAL HISTORY.—An amphibious-looking gentleman passed our office yesterday, with what was to us a nondescript looking animal. He called it a Mexican guana. It would seem, judging from the general and topographical appearance of the guana, as if nature occasionally had her freaks of eccentricity, and, after pursuing a straightforward and natural course, would suddenly produce something that combined in strange contrast all the peculiarities of fifty well-looking and familiar objects. Now the guana has fore legs put on behind, and its hind legs not only put on before, but fastened on backward, and upside down. If its mouth is shut it is as tight as an oyster, and as destitute of life, but let it smile, and its head opens away back of its ears, if it has any ears.

"Its body is shaped like a guana's, and has a horn coming out on the top of its head for ornament, and small scales all over it, for no cause whatever that we could perceive. Its eyes resemble those of a duck, as they are supposed to look in a storm, but instead of turning in their sockets they work up and down. It appears to be possessed of good natured when in a hurry, and it doesn't try to bite until it wreaths its face in a smile. Its tail, however, is its great feature—that is indefinite in its length, and variegated in its color. After you examine the guana, generally and particularly, the conclusion is forced upon you that it was made out of the odds and ends of lizards, butterflies, snakes, and confectionery, and is altogether the most extraordinary insect, bug, or animal, that ever lived."

#### WILLIAM H. PRESIDENT.

From the Preface to the History of the Conquest of Peru the North American extracts the following interesting detail of the difficulties under which this writer has labored from impaired eyesight:

"Before closing these remarks I may be permitted to add a few of a personal nature. In several former notices of my writings the author has been said to be blind; and more than once I have had the credit of having lost my sight in the composition of my first history. When I have met with such erroneous accounts, I have hastened to correct them. But the present occasion affords me the best means of doing so; and I am the more desirous of this as I fear some of my own remarks, in the prefaces to my former histories, have led to the mistake.

"While at the University I received an injury in one of my eyes which deprived me of the sight of it. The other, soon after, was attacked by inflammation so severely that, for some time, I lost the sight of that also; and, though it was subsequently restored, the organ was so much disordered as to remain permanently debilitated, while twice in my life, since, I have been deprived of the use of it for all purposes of reading and writing for several years together. It was during one of these periods that I received from Madrid the materials for the "History of Ferdinand and Isabella," and in my disabled condition, with my transatlantic treasures lying around me, I was like one pining from hunger in the midst of abundance. In this state, I resolved to make the ear, if possible, do the work of the eye. I procured the services of a secretary, who read to me the various authorities; and in time I became so familiar with the sounds of the different foreign languages (to some of which, indeed, I had been previously accustomed by a residence abroad) that I could comprehend his reading without much difficulty. As the reader proceeded I dictated copious notes; and, when these had swelled to a considerable amount, they were read to me repeatedly, till I had mastered their contents sufficiently for the purposes of composition. The same notes furnished an easy means of reference to sustain the text.

"Still another difficulty occurred in the mechanical labor of writing, which I found a severe trial to the eye. This was remedied by means of a writing-case, such as is used by the blind, which enabled me to commit my thoughts to paper without the aid of sight, serving me equally well in the dark as in the light. The characters thus formed made a near approach to hieroglyphics; but my secretary became expert in the art of deciphering, and a fair copy—with a liberal allowance for unavoidable blunders—was transcribed for the use of the printer. I have described the process with more minuteness, as some curiosity has been repeatedly expressed in reference to my *modus operandi* under my privations, and the knowledge of it may be of some assistance to others in similar circumstances.

"Though I was encouraged by the sensible progress of my work, it was necessarily slow. But in time the tendency to inflammation diminished, and the strength of the eye was confirmed more and more. It was at length so far restored that I could read for several hours of the day, though my labors in this way necessarily terminated with the daylight. Nor could I ever dispense with the services of a secretary, or with the writing-case; for, contrary to the usual experience, I have found writing a severe trial to the eye than reading—a remark, however, which does not apply to the reading a manuscript; and to enable myself, therefore, to revise my composition more carefully, I caused a copy of the "History of Ferdinand and Isabella" to be printed for my own inspection, before it was sent to the press for publication. Such as I have described the improved state of my health during the preparation of the "Conquest of Mexico," and, satisfied with being raised so nearly to a level with the rest of my species, I scarcely envied the superior good fortune of those who could prolong their studies into the evening, and the later hours of the night.

But a change has again taken place during the last two years. The sight of my eye has become gradually dimmed, and the soundness of the nerve has been so far increased that for several weeks of the last year I have not opened a volume, and through the whole time I have not had the use of it, on an average, for more than an hour a day. Nor can I cheer myself with the delusive expectation that, impaired as the organ has become, from having been tasked probably beyond its strength, it can ever renew its youth, or be of much service to me hereafter in my literary researches. Whether I shall have the heart to enter, as I have proposed, on a new and more extensive field of historical labor, with these impediments, I cannot say. Perhaps long habit, and a natural desire to follow up the career which I have so long pursued, may make this in a manner necessary, as my past experience has already proved that it is practicable.

"From this statement—too long, I fear, for his patience—the reader, who feels any curiosity about the matter, will understand the real extent of my embarrassment in my historical pursuits. That they have not been very light will be readily admitted, when it is considered that I have had but a limited use of my eye, in its best state, and that much of the time I have been debarrd from the use of it altogether. Yet the difficulties I have had to contend with are very far inferior to those which fall to the lot of a blind man. I know of no his-story, now alive, who can claim the glory of having overcome such obstacles but the author of "La Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands," who, to use his own touching and beautiful language, "has made himself the friend of darkness;" and who, to a profound philosophy that requires no light but that from within, unites a capacity for extensive and various research that might well demand the severest application of the student."

SERIOUS DISASTER.—As the steamer *Simon Kenton*, having on board a very large number of passengers, was leaving the wharf at St. Louis on the 28th ultimo, a serious calamity occurred. There was, it is supposed, a flaw in the stand which connects the boilers, and this giving way, a large quantity of steam and boiling water issued from it. Two of the deck passengers were within its range, and were dreadfully scalded. It is hardly possible that either of them can survive. On the person of one of these sufferers was found a very considerable amount of money, which was deposited for safe-keeping with P. Chouteau, jr. & Co. Both of the victims were Germans. The explosion created very great confusion among the passengers. One or two men jumped overboard and were drowned; and a German woman, with her child in her arms, attempted to jump into the yawl, but failed to do so. The child was drowned, but the distracted mother was picked up and saved.

IMPORTANT DECISION.—The Supreme Court yesterday rendered its judgment in the case which involved the validity of the testament of the late FRANCIS ZAVIER MARTIN. The judgment of the Second District Court of New Orleans is reversed *in toto*. Judge ROSS was the organ of the Court in pronouncing its unanimous opinion, and evinced great ability and research. The Court decides that the State is without capacity to contest the validity of wills made by its citizens, on the mere ground of informality or want of capacity to dispose of their property in a particular form; that a blind man is capable of making an holographic will; and as to the imputation of fraud sought to be fastened on the memory of that venerable magistrate, by this proceeding on the part of the law officers of the State, it is repelled with becoming dignity and firmness, and in language worthy of the high reputation of the Judge who pronounced it.—*N. O. Bulletin, June 22.*

GALLANTRY OF A HUSBAND.—Sir Humphrey Davy, the celebrated chemist and philosopher, when he published his "Elements of Chemical Philosophy," dedicated it not to a prince or a powerful nobleman, but to his Wife! And the dedication itself is so different in style and substance from the labored and fulsome flatteries which are found in the dedications of the day, and which manifest such evidence of maternal piety and tenderness, that it should not be lost sight of. We shall do all in our power to preserve it by laying it before our readers:

"To Lady Davy: There is no individual to whom I can with so much propriety or so much pleasure dedicate this work as to you. The interest you have taken in the progress of it has been a constant source of my exertions, and it was begun and finished in a period of my life which, owing to you, has been the happiest. regard it as a pledge that I shall continue to pursue science with unabated ardor; receive it as a proof of my ardent affection, which must be unalterable, for it is founded upon the admiration of your moral and intellectual qualities."

SERIOUS ACCIDENT FROM CULPABLE CARELESSNESS.—Through the carelessness of a driver, on Wednesday, a horse was permitted to run through Park Row, New York. He ran upon the sidewalk over Mr. THOMAS C. CRAFT, of Baltimore, and his wife, to whom he was married on Sunday last, in Roxbury, Massachusetts, knocking them down and injuring them very seriously. Mr. Craft received a severe contusion on the head, besides being seriously bruised. Mrs. Craft had her right shoulder dislocated, and was also very much bruised, and her clothing rent in tatters. They were taken to the house of Mr. Mowett, and Dr. John STEARNS was called, who dressed their wounds, and they are doing as well as the circumstances will permit.

## COMMUNICATIONS.

MESSRS. EDITORS: I regret extremely that a writer in the "Union" of last evening, who signs himself "A Roman Catholic," should have dragged the subject of religion, as he has done, into the arena of politics, and attempted to fasten upon the Whig party a settled and regularly constituted hostility to the Church of which he boasts himself a member. Now, sir, as an unworthy member of the same Church, and a Democrat at that—having co-operated with the Democratic party as an active member of it for twenty years and more—and having also aided and advocated the election of JAMES K. POLK to his present high station—I protest against this attempt of "A Roman Catholic" to identify the Whig party with any or either of the outrages perpetrated by the Convent-burners of Boston, the Church-burners of Philadelphia, or the lying tales contained in the book called "Maria Monk." And why? Because the very circumstances attending all these cases, a part of which I will show, from indisputable facts, would rather attach the crimes alluded to by "A Roman Catholic" to his own party than to the other. It is agreed on all hands that those who committed the outrages enumerated above were the *canaille* of their respective communities; and, as such, were more likely to come from that party, or to have been furnished by it, in the greatest proportion as to numbers, which has the largest mass of them within its ranks. Now, sir, no one will say that the Whigs can furnish more rowdies, robbers, church-burners, or convent-burners than the Democrats, and "A Roman Catholic," if he be not totally blind to the condition of his own party, will agree with me in this. But what are the facts?

Soon after the destruction of the Charlestown Convent, a Democrat whom I had at work for me told me he was cognizant of the conspiracy to burn it some days before it happened, but that he took no part in the business. I was bound to believe him, as I had no proof to the contrary; but it occurs to me now that if it was exclusively a Whig plot, he would not have been a confidant of the measure. Is not the presumption a fair one from this single circumstance that the "Democrats" of Boston had as much to do with the destruction of the Convent, if not more, than the Whigs? I think so. But I believe that neither, as a party, had anything to do with it; how unjust, therefore, to charge any political party with an act of this sort.

As to the "Maria Monk" publication, how could that be a Whig measure, when it was Wm. L. Stone, Esq., a leader of the Whig party of New York, who took the trouble and incurred the expense of going to Montreal and satisfying himself of its entire falsehood; an account of which he published himself afterwards on his return home? "A Roman Catholic" must have a hard chisel to write such arodomante, and the *Union* a great deal of modesty to publish it, after its article of the 11th of May last. The *Union* and its correspondent, I fear, are neither very nice nor very scrupulous about what they assert in the present desperate condition in which the leaders of the party have placed themselves on this subject in connection with the Mexican war. The Catholics of the United States want no advice from either at this time; they are of age, and able to judge for themselves, and "A Roman Catholic," if he be really such, which I doubt, will learn it soon enough.

Again, sir, as to the destruction of the Churches in Philadelphia, here is the history of it: Alderman Hugh Clark, of Kensington, who was nominated in 1842, I think, by the city and County Democratic Convention for the office of county treasurer, was defeated by his own party by some 2,600 votes on account of being "A Roman Catholic" and a *rickman*, and the Whig nominee, Joseph Plankinton, was elected. The year following, an election for the same office took place, and the *Irish*, who could not influence the Convention to nominate Clark again for it, defeated the whole city and county ticket, consisting of county treasurer, auditor, county commissioner, and sheriff. The "Democrats," enraged at the independence of the Irish in not submitting to this species of proscription, organized a "Native American" association at a tavern at the corner of 5th and Race streets, kept by Wm. Dolnar, a leading "Democrat" of Philadelphia, and chairman of the first Van Buren meeting held in that city during the last campaign. Unfortunately for this movement, an Irishman, whom they thought was a "Native," was invited to join them, which he did for the purpose, as he told me, of exposing their doings, which was accordingly done, and the three hundred "Democrats" who signed the constitution of their "Native" organization thought it better to "burst up" of their own accord, lest they might eventually lose all the Irish votes of the city and county. Simultaneously with this movement the "Philadelphia Sun," a Native American paper, was bought out by a Reverend "Democratic" gentleman of the place, and a Democrat put at its head as editor. Have these gentlemen ever been anything else but Democrats? are the ten or twelve hundred standing majority in Southwark, the centre and heart of "Nativism" and "Church-burners," Whigs? Go and ask any one residing in "old Democratic Southwark," and he will tell you, No! No! "A Roman Catholic" counted without his host when he undertook to be the advocate of a party and a paper (the *Union*) which has been violating every principle of justice and common honesty towards those who have ever been their firmest supporters. If shame have not lost its blush, the *Union* is the last paper in the land through whose columns "A Roman Catholic" ought to make charges of this kind against any party. Does "A Roman Catholic" forget its caricatures of Catholicity in its hundreds of articles, editorial as well as communicated, from the first of "Bundelcund" down to its last "speculation" about robbing the Mexican churches? Let him go back, sir, over its files, and see for himself its flimsy and its church and her creed, and say if he had not the "Union" and its supporters in view when he wrote the foolish and false charges against the Whigs. I am no Whig, sir; I have ever been a Democrat; but the "speculation" of the *Union* has opened my eyes in connexion with what I have said of the party doing in Philadelphia, to see at least that Catholicity has nothing to expect from the *sans culottes* of party.

#### ANOTHER ROMAN CATHOLIC.

JUNE 30, 1847.

MESSRS. EDITORS: I have long marked your course; and, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, I have been forced to approve it. With respect to your course on the subject of the Mexican war, I can only say that had you taken any other than that you have, I should—I must have despised you. You and I know that, after all, in the judgment that the truly wise and great of our own times, and that of posterity after us, will make up, it is *moral principle* alone that will become the subject of consideration. Ability, intellectual or circumstantial, wealth, position, all, such things are extraneous to the great issue, whether with our hearts we have clung to the right or to the wrong. Politically, editorially, I honestly and sincerely accord to you my testimony that you have fought the good fight, you have kept your fidelity to the constitution and true policy of your country. I trust you will reap that reward of an approving conscience which is sufficient to balance all outward detraction, misrepresentation, and neglect. But, gentlemen